



The President's Daily Brief

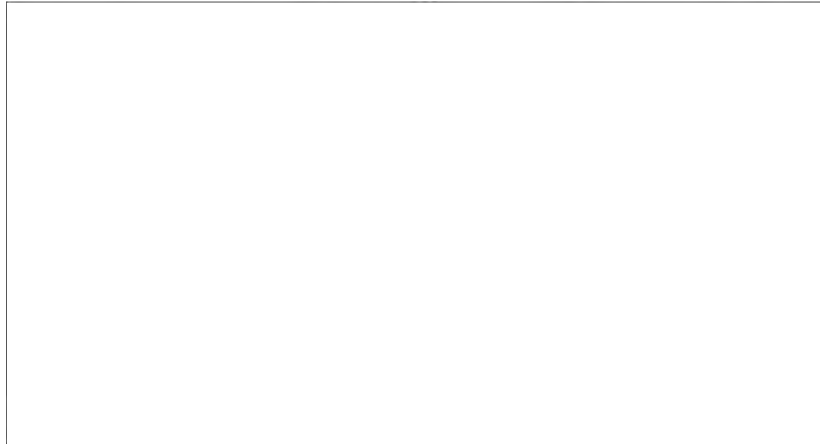
~~Top Secret~~ 15 June 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
15 JUNE 1968

1. West Germany



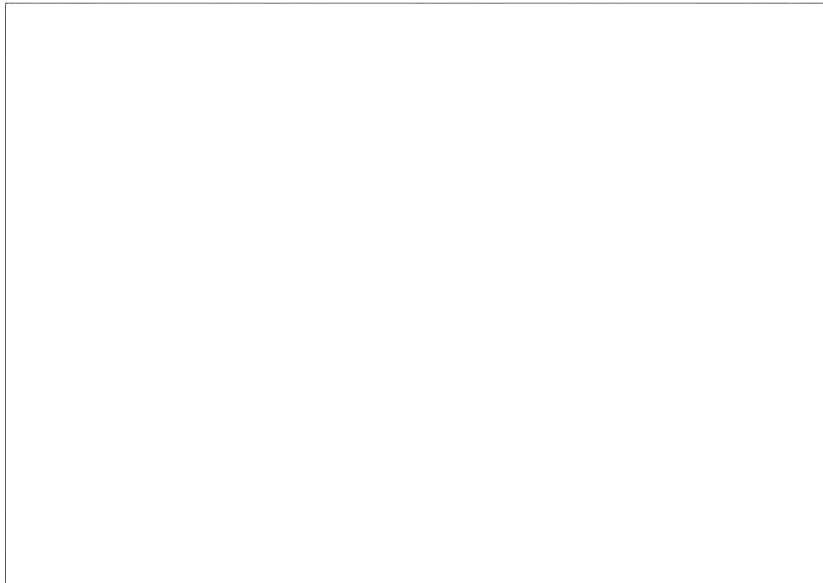
2. Soviet Union

Following UN approval of the draft nonproliferation treaty and conclusion of the consular agreement, the Soviet Union is attempting to dispel any notion that it might work more closely with the US while the Vietnam war continues. Soviet press reaction to President Johnson's appeal for more cooperation has been uniformly unfriendly. Recent anti-US propaganda, for example the treatment of Senator Kennedy's assassination, has become more virulent.

There are many reasons behind this attitude. For one, the Soviets probably want to avoid giving Peking any sign of US-Soviet accommodation. They may also reckon that any move toward the US would be read as a weakening of their support for the North Vietnamese position in Paris, whereas continued coolness toward the US would weaken the US position. Other ingredients are Soviet anxiety over trends in Eastern Europe and over the impact of "alien ideas" in the Soviet Union.

3. Soviet Union - Czechoslovakia

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Pravda yesterday carried an article slurring a Czechoslovak party secretary. This was the first specifically anti-Czechoslovak article since Kosygin's visit last month, and the first Soviet attack on a high-level Czechoslovak personality since the new leadership came to power in January.

4. Philippines- Malaysia

The thorny problem of the Philippine claim to part of Malaysian Borneo comes up for discussion in Bangkok this Monday. We do not see much prospect of progress.

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Hope that Malaysia would compromise faded last March following disclosure of Philippine subversion efforts. Over the longer run, the interests of both countries may help to mute the problem.

5. Soviet Union - Vietnam

The [redacted]

[redacted] that any resumption of bombing around Hanoi would probably result in the dispatch of Soviet "volunteer" air combat units to North Vietnam.

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This particular attaché has long pursued a tough line on Vietnam. He alluded to the possible arrival of Soviet combat pilots as long ago as April 1967. His return to the topic probably is his way of stressing the importance the Soviets attach to the bombing halt. Moscow publicly supports Hanoi's demands for a total halt, and few Soviet diplomats have missed an opportunity to remind us of this.

We would expect more threats of this type as the press speculates on a resumption of the bombing.

6. Kenya

Kenyatta's failing health is becoming more apparent. Since his recent stroke he has increasingly frequent irrational periods and seems unable to make decisions. Tribal leaders are already jockeying for position. As they see Kenyatta fading, this infighting will grow.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam



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Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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Eaton's Thoughts: US industrialist Cyrus Eaton has been stressing the importance of his recent trip to Moscow and Paris, but he has given no indication that he really accomplished anything. According to

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a reliable FBI source, he informed Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov in New York that he had had a "splendid" time in Moscow and was feted by Kosygin, with whom he swapped unspecified ideas about the Paris talks. He said he was well received by Averell Harriman when he stopped off in Paris. Eaton alleged that Harriman made calls to Washington to set up appointments for him with such officials as Clark Clifford. Back in the US, he has been urging that the US stop the bombing as an act of good faith, claiming that he had assurances that movement in the peace talks would follow.

We do not think there is much substance behind the ideas Eaton peddles. Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin told Ambassador Thompson recently that if the Soviets wanted to pass a message to Washington, they would not use Eaton.

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Hanoi on the Fighting in the South: Hanoi propaganda is portraying the current fighting in South Vietnamese urban centers as a new "high tide" of the revolutionary struggle which will hasten the collapse of the allies. Hanoi's army paper, in an article broadcast domestically in Vietnamese on 14 June, claimed that the fighting in urban areas, particularly in Saigon, represented a new development in guerrilla warfare. It praised the "infinitely resourceful and fruitful activities" of the guerrillas and claimed that they are "deep rooted" in the southern cities. It said they will play an important role in forcing the allies to accept an entirely new battlefield. The article claimed that in the cities the guerrillas represent all strata of society and have the advantage of surprise and knowledge of the area. It concluded by predicting that the struggle in the cities will grow in intensity and "aggravate the deadly wounds of the US aggressors and their henchmen." It warned that savage countermeasures could be expected, but said the allies will not be able to extricate themselves from their deadlock in the city battlefield.

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Giap Views the Fighting: Defense Minister Giap, in an interview with an Algerian correspondent broadcast by the French Press Agency on 14 June, also made

favorable reference to the urban fighting in the South. He declined to draw a direct parallel between the current combat and that which preceded the collapse of the French in 1954, but he did say that the over-all military situation in the South is like "one long battle of Dien Bien Phu." He claimed that the Communists would soon enjoy certain victory. Giap also denounced US assertions of peaceful intentions in Vietnam, claiming that the US was continuing to give evidence of its military designs by furnishing the South Vietnamese with additional supplies and manpower.

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Liberation Front Spokesman on Help from Outside: In a press conference on 14 June reported by Tass, the Liberation Front representative in Moscow, Nguyen Van Tien, picked up the theme of Vietnamese nationalism and the right of the North to help the South. This, of course, has cropped up more than once in Hanoi's statements, and recently was also reflected in official Front propaganda. Tien stressed that the Vietnamese nation is united and that the people of the South have the right to rely on assistance from their Northern compatriots. He went on to endorse the Paris talks, claiming that the Front "fully supported" the North Vietnamese position concerning a solution of the Vietnamese problem.

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Appeals from Viet Cong Radio: The Viet Cong's clandestine radio has issued appeals from both the Viet Cong army and the Liberation Front itself for the people of Saigon to rise up and assist the Communists in their attacks in the capital city. The army appeal advises the local citizenry to stay away from military bases, training centers, supply bases, and "nerve centers" of both US and South Vietnamese installations. It also encourages them to join in the fighting on the side of "the people."

The Liberation Front appeal is more general but has much the same tone. It appeals to the people to join or to help the Communists and devotes special attention to "officers and men of the army, policemen and civil servants of the Saigon government" to desert their posts at "this decisive moment."

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Relations with Sweden: Sweden keeps edging closer to some kind of formal ties with the North Vietnamese. According to press reports, Stockholm has for the first time supplied direct medical assistance to Hanoi. The aid comes in the form of funds for the construction of a hospital. While Scandinavian Red Cross societies have in the past given medical assistance to North Vietnam, none of the various governments has done so before now.

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Visitors to North Vietnam: The North Vietnamese News Agency has announced that a delegation of British and Canadian women has completed a two-week visit to North Vietnam and has promised to return home and "step up" agitation against the Vietnamese war. The only names given were Hetty Worhaus for the British and Micky Murry for the Canadians.

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